
How Parents Can Grow Confidence in Children

Creating brighter futures



By Priti Parekh

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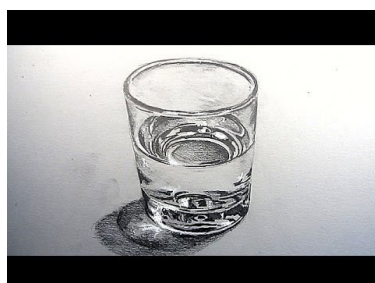
This book has been written for parents who feel like they need a little helping hand with the use of NLP techniques in the minefield of parenting. It will explain the basis of how NLP Practitioners operate, and offers examples of just some of the techniques that are used in workshops and one to one sessions. Having read this book, should you wish to have some sessions for your child, you will understand the process better.

Parenting is the one of the most rewarding things I have experienced to date, yet also the one of them most challenging. I have studied childhood in depth and also worked with children and families in a support role for a major charity and in schools. Being a parent is not easy as you may well know yourself, which is why you are probably reading this right now! I don't believe for a second when a parent says that they have not had any issues with their children (and I don't know many that have said that either!) However mild they be, we would all agree that experiencing issues with your child from time to time is simply a part of their process in growing up.

Life throws at us a good mixture of experiences but how we respond to those experiences is the key thing in how we develop and grow as people. In my own opinion, education, money, status, etc can be earned at any date throughout life, but what children really need are tools for being mentally resilient so that they learn to negate the undesirable effects of unwanted experience and memories. NLP can give children these tools not only for when they are going through tough times when young but for life. Children can then be strong and powerful to succeed in any

domain of life they wish to pursue no matter what. Their attitudes are different, their outlook is brighter and their relationships much happier.

“Is your glass half full or half empty?”



This book is sectioned into three parts.

Part one is about NLP, what it is and how it works. Chapter two looks at confidence and parenting - what it looks like for both the child and the parents and why it is important to have it. Chapter three looks at why Tony Robbins' principles on Human Needs are pertinent to all parents interested in creating brighter futures for children.

Part two explains briefly how you can use techniques from NLP to engage better by gaining good rapport with your child and grow his or her confidence. There are also suggestions for you on how you can help your child to reframe negative states of mind and changing limiting beliefs to ones that empower for future success.

Finally, in part three, I have brought it all together in a short compilation of Top Tips for both you and your child to bear in mind.

I do hope you enjoy reading this book as much as I have enjoyed writing it. When you put the advice into action, the rewards will follow.

In my opinion it would be best to read the chapters in order as they follow on from each other, building on information so that you can piece it all together by the end.

I wish you the best of luck in resolving whatever concerns you may have. If you need some additional help my website link is below so that you can reach out.

Priti Parekh

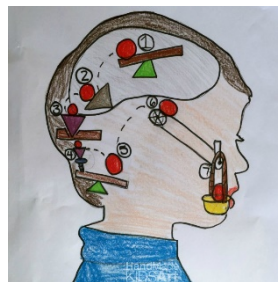
www.kidstherapycoventry.nlp4kids.org

CHAPTER 1

What is NLP?

How it all works

NLP stands for Neuro Linguistic Programming



“NLP was developed in the early 1970’s and was created by Richard Bandler and John Grinder who studied excellence within the field of therapy. Their main studies were of Milton Erickson (responsible for bringing hypnosis to the clinical world) Virginia Satir (a family therapist) and Fitz Perls (founder of Gestalt therapy). Bandler and Grinder also drew upon the work of linguistics, anthropologists and psychoanalysts. NLP is an art and a science. It is largely based on the idea that the sensory information around us is translated into thoughts and ideas that affect our state, physiology and behaviour and therefore our results”.

(PB Training manual S1P1)

Let me explain this a little further....

The term “*neuro*” is related to how our brain processes information that is taken in by all of our senses. When the brain receives the information, it will process it by passing it through internal filters which allow it to store it in the appropriate filing system according to our own unique experiences. This means that the brain will either *delete*, *distort* or *generalise* information according to what we already know. Once this happens, it will then create an “*internal representation*” based on existing knowledge and the new knowledge. Our internal representation then becomes our reality and represents our emotional state, which in turn, then determines our physical and emotional behaviour.

For example. If we have had previous happy experiences with, let’s say, cake, then when the brain sees a new cake, it will automatically say “Aha! You love cake! You should probably eat it!” On the other hand if you ate cake many times before and loathed it, you will probably continue to feel this way and not want it unless someone forced you to eat it under duress. (I do not have a problem with cake by the way – my issue is the first one but I don’t really want to change this anyway!) Even so, you will still probably hate it. The brain becomes conditioned to certain responses and continues to behave that way until it becomes totally adept at making the same responses. Another example is smoking. Some people may only smoke socially. In their cases, their trigger will always be going to the pub and meeting friends or whatever it is that they do whenever they tend to smoke. At other times they probably can go for days without touching a cigarette.



The term “*linguistic*” refers to the language we use with others and also to ourselves internally (known as self-talk). It also includes the nonverbal language we use to project our thoughts,(either consciously or subconsciously) such as specific body language and facial expressions. What we say (verbally or non-verbally) has a big impact on others as this is the way we express our internal thoughts and feelings. Therefore, it would be safe to say that what we say to *ourselves* also has a big impact on how we feel and thus behave once that language has been processed by the brain.

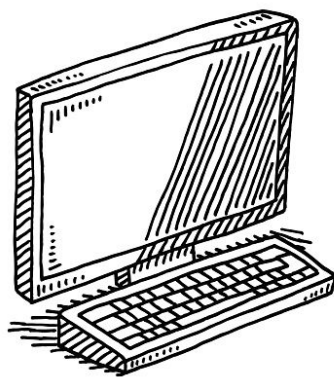
For example, if we keep saying internally, “I hate myself, I hate myself...” well the odds are that you will probably hate yourself for a very long time or at least until you change this train of thought.



In NLP, language is used carefully to change a person’s responses and thus behaviour. Words are used very selectively and specifically to change the way a person may respond to any situation.

The term “*programming*” refers to the way we run patterns in our brains to achieve specific and desired outcomes, i.e. our behaviour patterns. If we were to change the mental strategies and patterns, then as a result, our behaviour changes too.

For example, if a child comes home and throws his/her coat on the floor every day without fail, then the suggestion is that the brain has become conditioned to doing this and this behaviour is done automatically. Eventually the brain does not even have to think that it needs to throw the coat on the floor, it just instructs to do so. If, however, the child was to change their routine and retrain the brain by retelling and teaching it new behaviour of hanging it up instead, then eventually the brain would be accustomed to only this (over time!). This is really simple stuff you may say, and we all use reprogramming in our daily lives to a level without making a big deal of it. What is important though, is that we use it at times when we become stressed, nervous, anxious etc. because this is when we often tend to submit to the doom and gloom instead. When we constantly teach our brain specific alternative positive or challenging responses in these situations, then we can overcome most hurdles much easier. The brain thus becomes conditioned to not reacting and responding with negative responses. Instead, it becomes accustomed to welcoming any challenges with the appropriate responses.



It would be true to say that we cannot change all the things that happen in our daily lives. We cannot protect our children from many of these things that happen either. Friends fall out with each other, parents fall out with each other, illness occurs, peer pressure, exams or study stress, well, the list is very long....

An NLP practitioner will aim to change the way the child will respond to the information that is taken in by the senses by *reframing* it (more on this later) with the use of positive and suggestive language, strategies and patterns. This then changes the internal representation of that information for the child and therefore reprograms old unwanted behavioural patterns with new desired behaviour.

Some Presuppositions of NLP

NLP has presuppositions that the practitioner always has in mind when working with people. They allow the practitioner to work without bias to achieve results.

These are my favourite ones in particular :

- Everyone has a unique model of the world and we should respect other people's model of the world.
- People are not their behaviour.
- The meaning of all behaviour is dependent upon the context it appears in.
- There are no unresourceful people, only unresourceful states.
- There is no failure, only feedback.
- Everyone is in charge of their mind, and therefore their results.
- If you keep doing what you've always done, you'll keep getting what you've always got.

The wonderful thing about NLP for children is that it works particularly well when there is support for the child from the parents or caregivers reminding them that they can change their own responses and perspectives to problems. This can take only a little time, because the brain only needs about 3 weeks to change habits, so, with persistence, NLP can yield big benefits for that child.

Happy children equals happy parents!

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Happy parents equals happy children!

TIP : If you would like to read an interesting book on habits, read:

THE POWER OF HABIT by Charles Duhigg

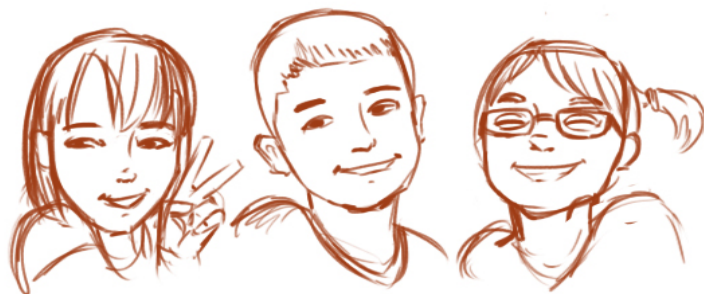
Remember!

In some cases you may need to see a GP, so please make sure you are not underestimating a problem. If your NLP practitioner thinks this is necessary they will also advise you to go there first.

CHAPTER 2

Confidence

Confident Parents = Confident Children



Here is one definition of confidence that I like:

“sure of oneself; having no uncertainty about one's own abilities,
correctness, successfulness, etc.; self-confident; bold:
a confident speaker”.

(Dictionary.com)

There is absolutely no doubt that every loving parent would want this definition of confidence to be what they want for their child. When a child is confident, we as parents are happy, relaxed and more confident too as we rest assured in the knowledge that our children will be ok in most situations that are thrown at them. However, to have confident children requires confident parents too.

Imagine a parent who is constantly worried that this may happen or that may happen if we let our children do certain things or go places.

It is true that there are more dangers in society now more than ever before – specifically with the accessibility of so much content and unsuitable imagery most readily available online and on mobile phones. There are risks of grooming and bullying etc, where perpetrators hide behind their screens and target vulnerable young children. As parents do we constantly invade children's privacy by taking control of all their communication online? Or do we allow them autonomy and let them have free reign without constant supervision?

I suppose the best answer to this would be to have a healthy balance and open communication where children can talk to adults when or if they feel something is wrong. This is what a good bond and relationship with children looks like to me. It is important that for children to know that if they need support then parents are there to help unravel dilemmas and get to the bottom of things if required. But for this to

happen it has to be built up with a level of confidence and understanding on behalf of both parties. Generally, being a confident parent means having trust and faith in your capacities, capabilities and actions as a parent.

It pays to be informed in risks in all domains of your child's life and then discussing them together so that they know why you may or may not be allowing them to do certain things. Children need to be aware of dangers and risks as much as parents, so trying to protect them by not telling them (although still with a good intention) is not always the best option. Be honest and open with them always and make sure they know you are always there. When I was working in safeguarding previously, one of the biggest problems was children talking to adults. Many of them felt they would not be either heard, believed or understood by their parents. While that work was about safeguarding, you may wonder what that has to do with your child if they are just a bit anxious for example. But the relevance of it here is that small troubles can sometimes have the potential to escalate into much bigger problems later that may involve safeguarding.

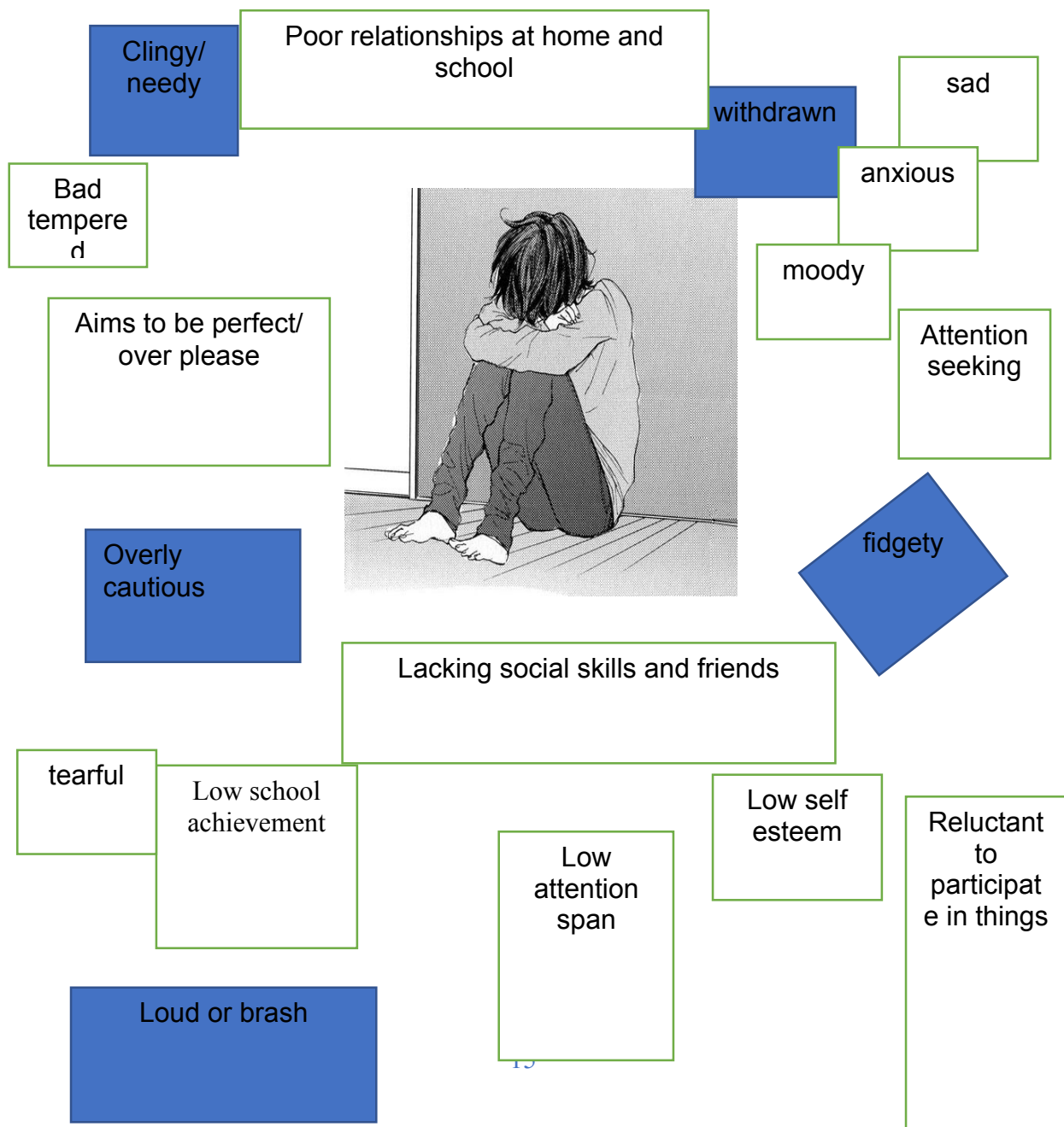
So what does a lack of confidence in children look like then? What are the causes likely to be? Also what kind of symptoms or behaviour might they exhibit?

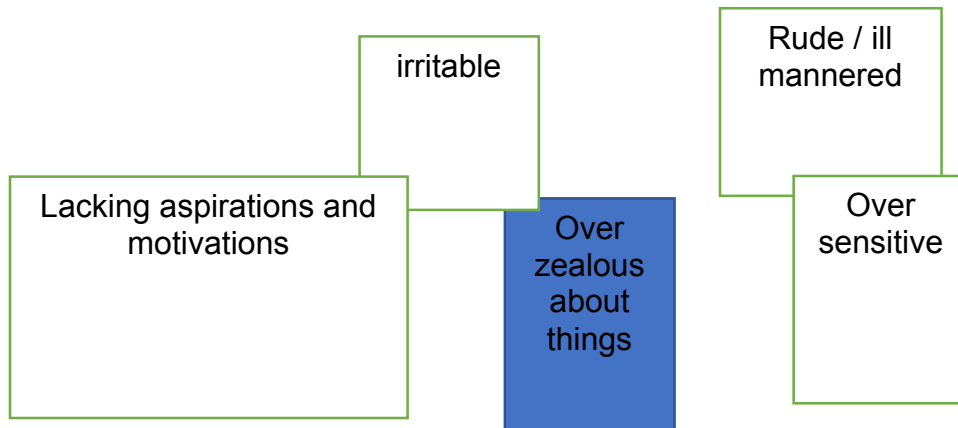
Your child may just naturally be shy and reserved but still be quietly confident at the same time. It is possible that this is a hereditary disposition if either parent is like this, in which case, personally I don't feel like that is something to be overly worried about

as your child will still have the qualities of “confident” and utilise them when necessary. What is important is that they *do utilise them when necessary*.

If you feel your child is missing out on opportunities or suffers injustice due to a lack of confidence in situations, then I feel that it is something you should be concerned about.

All children are unique and can react very differently to situations when they are worried and or lacking in confidence.





Your child may be displaying some of these behaviours due to an unforeseen unfortunate trigger or circumstance in the family. However, they may not have experienced a trigger at all and may just naturally be shy or timid, particularly when there are other children around them who like to dominate.

Possible triggers or reasons for the above behaviour:

- Parental divorce or excessive arguments and shouting at home
- Bereavement of close family or pets
- School transitions
- Study stress / problems with understanding work
- Cyber bullying or face to face bullying
- Trauma
- Abuse

Be vigilant with your child and recognise behaviours that do not fit their usual character. Observe them and see when in particular they display certain signs of low

self esteem or confidence and talk to them. It may be when there are certain people around or situations that make them more anxious. Always reassure your child by spending quality time with them talking to them and letting them know that you are there for them.

Having said the above on love and connection, from an NLP perspective it is also important for parents to challenge children and help them to overcome the need for constant love too so as not make them overly dependent on this. This will increase their resilience, motivation and confidence to overcome obstacles on their own.

Types of questions to ask and discussions to have are covered later in chapter 4 on ***The Power of Language.***

CHAPTER 3

Human Needs

What We All Need



Tony Robbins is a world-renowned self-help guru and has published many books on the topic of Human Needs and personal growth.

According to him we all need the following to be happy and stress free to foster appropriate confidence :

1. Growth
2. Love and connection
3. Contribution
4. Certainty
5. Significance
6. Variety / Uncertainty

Growth

We need to grow mentally through experiences and learning as we develop and get older in order for our brains to collate information and new patterns of healthy behaviour. Children should be provided with choices and opportunities to develop their inner strength. Allow them to decide on things whenever they can however small and watch them flourish.

Love and Connection

We need love and connection from our relationships that we have with each other for us to feel safe and secure. Give children plenty of praise at the right times letting them know that they are loved regardless of anything else that is going on in your own or their lives.

Contribution

We need to contribute in positive ways to our relationships and the world in which we live so that we harbour feelings of self-worth. Allow children to contribute

around the house and in other areas of family life so that the family feels like a interdependent unit rather than run by just one or two people.

Certainty

We need to feel like we can trust and know specific outcomes in specific aspects in our lives such as relationships, work and progress. We need to know that no matter what happens, there are certain people and situations we can have faith in. Create and maintain routines and steadiness in daily life if they are not already there.

Significance

We need to feel we are needed and required by others, which makes everything worthwhile - having purpose and direction brings fulfilment. Help children to develop their ambitions by exploring ideas and concepts in the wider world and at home which they can look forward to applying as they grow. Ask them to finish the following sentence:

“Without me or my work “

Variety / Uncertainty

As the saying goes “*variety is the spice of life.*”.

When we have various thrilling and exciting new experiences, they bring fun and curiosity into our lives. New experiences also provide us with new knowledge to develop. Children need to believe that there is always still more to explore.

I'm not sure about others, but I know that when my children were a lot younger and I was a busy mum, whenever I used to read "How to be happy ..." and other similar articles in family magazines etc, quite often I realised that it was so easy to toss the information aside and just work with whatever was happening in the moment. Then I would reflect sometimes when the children were in bed, that maybe I should have let them do this themselves or had more patience with that etc. It is however, never too late to start on good habits because I believe you can change as soon as you want to!

As human beings, we all need these things to keep us motivated and confident. They allow us to look upwards and onwards so that we can keep enjoying ourselves and achieving in life. Children's needs are no different to ours and in order to grow into independent confident adults they also need all of six Human Needs too.

TIP : To learn more about the inspiring Toni Robbins follow the link for the podcast:
<https://www.tonyrobbins.com/podcasts/why-we-do-what-we-do>

CHAPTER 4

The Power of Language

Effective Communication

How do you get your child to be more confident when they need to have a voice?

Language is what we use to convey our feelings and emotions to each other and expressing what we do or don't want to happen in any situation. It means people will hear us and hopefully listen. This way we pave ways to achieving whatever we need – there may be conditions attached, and that's when we negotiate, but at least we are being heard instead of being invisible.

How to Know What is Worrying Your Child

Start a discussion about the said topic that is worrying your child.

- Be open and honest and easy when you are talking to them.
- Listen to what they are saying and avoid distractions (other children, pets etc)
- Give them your complete attention (ie, stop cooking, or using your phone or watching the tv...).

Aim to delve deeper into what they saying **exactly** by asking questions around the issue, explaining **specifically** how it is a problem to them doing what they need to do.

Quite often children say “I don’t know” or something along those lines.

Avoid using “WHY?” The word ‘why’ often causes us to look into the past, negatively.

Instead, ask:

- “How is that a problem?”
- “How would you feel if this happened?”
- “How would you feel if this didn’t happen?”
- “What would it mean to you if it happened?”
- “What would it mean to you if it didn’t happen?”
- “What else would it allow to happen if you spoke out?”



You get the picture.....

Using Correct Body Language

Matching and Mirroring to Gain Rapport with Your Child

We can use voice intonation and body language to connect to people on a better level so that we understand each other and open up more during discussions.

When gaining rapport with others, only 7% of what we *say* matters, so it's important to say words that empathise showing that you care and understand what is being said.

Next is *tonality* at 38%, meaning the tone that we use, so try to stay calm even if you want to scream and shout inside. Reacting adversely is a sure way to stop children talking to adults.

Then, a whopping 55% of our *physiology* conveys what we want to say to others. We have all heard the saying

“Actions speak louder than words!”

well that’s where it comes from!

Therefore, how you sit, what you do with your arms and your facial expressions speaks volumes to the child when you are trying to gain their trust so it’s important to be extra mindful of these.

- Speak calmly – particularly if they are high pitched and agitated.
- Speak at the same speed to match theirs.
- Use similar words and similar experiences.
- Body language – observe how they sit, legs crossed, arms folded etc, match them and then when you feel you are both connected, you can lead them into relaxed positions in order to make them relax too.
- Sit at their level (e.g. next to them and not on a higher chair)
- Look at them directly and connect.
- Have a similar rate of breathing - slow down and be relaxed.
- Smile (only if the content of the conversation allows you to) – it’s contagious!

□

TIP: Great book to read:

Stop Anxiety and Grow Confidence by NLP4Kids Director Gemma Bailey

<https://nlp4kids.org/stop-anxiety-grow-confidence>

CHAPTER 5

Reframing

Seeing From a Different Perspective

“Reframing takes the internal representation (our own specific version of events) and changes it’s meaning”. (PB Training manual S9P1)

In other words, this is when we take a negative statement and turn it into a positive one from which the child can benefit and derive new positive intentions and meanings therefore changing behaviour.

There are two types of reframing:

1. Context Reframe

2. Meaning Reframe

A context reframe is when we change the meaning of the context of the problem.

Ask the child to think of a different context in which the problem behaviour would have a very different meaning. For example, the child says:

I'm too worried that the teacher will always give me hard things to learn.

The context is the school in this scenario, so we could change it to:

- What would happen if you pretended you could do it?
- What if you could do it?
- What if you could do it and also helped the other children?
- Do you think the teacher might start crying if you didn't do it?
- And so on.....

The meaning reframe changes the emotions around the problem. Ask the child to think of different emotions he/she could have instead of the existing one.

For example, the child says:

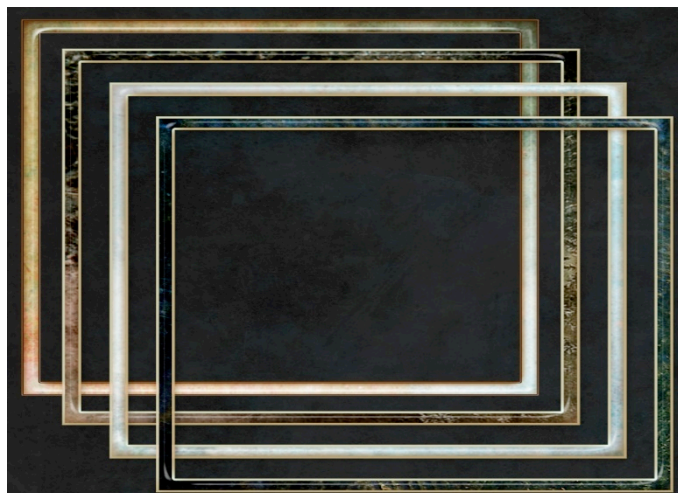
Whenever I feel sad, I want to cry.

We could change this to:

- Whenever I feel sad I want to laugh.
- Whenever I feel sad I could pee my pants with laughter!
- Whenever I feel sad I might be making other people sad too.
- Whenever I feel sad I want to remember all the good times I have had with that person.
- And so on.... (keep changing the meaning of sadness)

Remember!

It's good to keep playing around with different scenarios in your own head so that whenever your child says something consistently you have some options ready for them!



TIP: To learn more about NLP read:

The Ultimate Introduction to NLP: How to Build a Successful Life

by Richard Bandler, Alessio Roberti & Owen Fitzpatrick

CHAPTER 6

Belief Change

Whether you think you can, or whether you think you can't; you'll be right!

Self-belief is crucial if you want your child to be successful in whatever they are doing.

Remind them that they are special and that they have their own unique qualities and abilities. Everybody is different so explain to your child that when they focus on the

right things in the right way they will be able to do whatever it is they want to achieve.

They just need to have SELF BELIEF!

Sometimes we all just need to hear that someone believes in us whatever age we are, even when we know they do, so tell them explicitly that you believe in them and know very well that they can do the things they want. This will encourage them no end and boost confidence.

Talk about their beliefs with the use of these questions and ask them to write the answers down (when things are written down it makes them more concrete):

- What belief do you currently not have, but wish you did?
- Why do you want this belief?
- What has to happen before I believe it?
- What will this belief allow me to do?
- What is a similar belief you already have?
- What will I do to have this new belief?
- When will I do it by?
- How will I do it?

- Who will help me?
- How will I feel when I have it?

Remember!

Have fun with this and don't make it too serious an activity. This way your child can savour the answers on an unconscious level and grow confidence at the same time

Top Tips for Confidence

Bringing it All Together:

To summarise then ☐

- Always bear in mind the presuppositions of NLP.
- Make time for your child by having open and honest conversations about the problem.
- Be mindful of triggers for undesired behaviours.
- Incorporate Toni Robbins' Six Human Needs in your daily life and routines.
- Give your child space and privacy to acknowledge feelings.
- Use positive language to empower your child.
- Use appropriate body language to convey unspoken messages.

- Use reframing to take on new perspectives to old problems.
- Install new positive beliefs to increase your child's confidence levels.

Sometimes tackling a challenge which is so close to home may cause you to feel overwhelmed - as if you don't know where to get started - even when deep down, you know what you should do.

Having someone work with both you and your child can enable you to get some clarity about how you are each feeling and what you need to do next. Getting some help can also enable you to identify a skills gap and learn what you need to know to improve.

I offer a free consultation session and if you have felt aligned with what you have read above, you would be very welcome to find out more about how I can help both you and your child in either workshops or one to one sessions.

I wish you and your family health and happiness!

Priti Parekh

Email: priti@nlp4kids.org

Tel: 07811043905

References

People Building Training Manual (2007) www.peoplebuilding.co.uk